DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 251 372 SO 016 062

AUTHOR Snodgrass, Sara E.
TITLE Writing as a Tool for Teaching Social Psychology.
PUB DATE Aug 84
NOTE 43p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (92nd, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, August 24-28, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Content Area Writing; Course Descriptions; Creative Thinking; Higher Education; Information Retrieval; Interdisciplinary Approach; Introductory Courses; Library Skills; Problem Solving; *Social Psychology; Student Projects; Teaching Methods; *Writing (Composition); Writing Improvement; Writing Processes; *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

Practical ways in which writing was used in a college level introductory social psychology course are described. Rather than being used almost exclusively as a tool for evaluation, the process of writing was also used as a tool for problem solving and for producing creative and analytical thinking. Writing was integrated into the course in three ways. First, students were required to keep a course log in which they wrote their reactions to the readings, class films and demonstrations, ideas for papers and projects, and other free writing. The second activity involved students in writing two short analyses of journal articles. Through this activity, they learned how to find literature on social psychology in the library, became familiar with the format of psychological research articles, and learned ways to approach reading and analyzing journal articles. The third activity that required writing was the planning and implementation of an observational study of some social psychological phenomenon. The appendices, which make up the bulk of the publication, contain the course outline and the student handouts that give step-by-step directions for each of the activities. (RM)

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ED251372

Writing as a Tool for Teaching Social Psychology

Sara E. Snodgrass

Skidmore College

Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, August, 1984, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

SP 016 062

Writing as a Tool for Teaching Social Psychology

Sara E. Snodgrass
Skidmore College

Abstract

The process of writing is a highly productive tool for learning the concepts and methods of social psychology. Writing, however, is most often used as an evaluative tool rather than as a teaching tool. This paper describes practical ways in which writing can be used in an introductory social psychology course to enhance the students' learning. Keeping a course log (a type of journal), writing analyses of published articles, doing an observational study and writing a formal research report are among the ideas presented. The techniques described here can be applied to any course in psychology and are not uniquely applicable to social psychology.

Writing as a Tool for Teaching Social Psychology

Sara E. Snodgrass
Skidmore College

In the typical psychology course, students write examinations and term papers. Students' writing is used almost exclusively as a tool for the evaluation of their learning. Therefore, writing is treated as a product, something that is produced after the work of learning is completed. In recent years, the process of writing has been suggested as a useful tool, not just for evaluation, but also for learning (e.g., Emig, 1977; Flower, 1981; Fulwiler & Young, 1982; Irmscher, 1979). The process of writing can be used as a problem-solving tool and as a tool for producing creative and analytical thinking. When students learn to write as a process, rather than to write only as the production of a finished paper, they find a freedom to express their thoughts and reactions without fear of evaluation. The process of writing brings out the student's own ideas and reinforces these ideas by giving them a reality (being visibly written) without concern for others' evaluation.

Calhoun and Selby (1979) and Costin (1982) have expressed concern over the lack of basic communication and writing skills found all too often in college undergraduates. Boice (1982), Klugh (1983), Spiegel, Cameron, Evans, and Nodine (1980), among others, have addressed this issue by suggesting that the teaching of writing skills be incorporated into the regular curriculum of psychology courses.

Writing, therefore, has far greater value in the psychology curriculum than its currently predominant use as a tool for evaluation. I have integrated writing into my introductory course in social psychology in several ways, primarily for the purpose of giving the students a tool for learning the material, secondarily for the purpose of helping them with their writing skills, and finally for the purpose of evaluation of learning.

Writing as a process is integrated into the Introductory Social Psychology course in several ways. (1) The students are required to keep a course log in which they write their reactions to the readings, class films and demonstrations, ideas for papers and projects, and other "free" writing. (2) The students write two short analyses of journal articles, through which they learn how to find psychological literature in the library, become familiar with the format of psychological research articles, and learn ways to approach reading and analyzing journal articles. (3) Each student plans and implements an observational study of some social psychological

phenomenon. This project incorporates writing throughout the project's process. Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

Course Log.

The course log serves several different functions. (1)It stimulates class discussions. Students are frequently asked to write in their logs for 5-10 minutes in class, following a film or a class demonstration, freely writing their feelings about and reactions to what they have just experienced. The ensuing class discussion is always lively, with most students participating. The writing process provides each of them with something to contribute, and their own personal thoughts already have established an element of respect by being written. I have had much more successful class discussions since using the class log as a stimulus. Spiegel, et al. (1980) also report finding that students participate more readily in class discussions after writing for 5-10 minutes.

(2)The logs serve as a work book as the students read the text. Many of the students choose to follow my suggestion to write in their logs their thoughts about the readings as they read the assignments in the text. This provides a means of summarizing the material, giving their own reactions, applying the content to their own lives, and is an excellent source for review for examinations. I found that the students who made the best grades on tests were the ones who used the logs more completely (taking notes from readings, writing anecdotes that came to mind as they read, wrote longer entries, etc.). Of course, I cannot tell whether the use of the logs helped improve grades on tests, or if students who tend to do well on tests are also the students who will take more notes and do their assignments more conscientiously!

(3)Many class demonstrations incorporate writing in the logs. For example, when we study self perception, we begin by writing ten answers to the question "Who Am I?" in the logs. When studying impression formation, the students describe their first impressions of someone they met at the beginning of the school year and then describe their current impressions and discuss why their impression may have changed. This is written in the logs, not to be turned in, but to be "free" writing. When we discuss attitude change and persuasion, the students write what they would say to a good friend to persuade them not to drive home from a party after heavy drinking. This stimulates discussion on styles of persuasion. Many other class activities such as these incorporate writing in the logs. This makes the material more relevant to their own lives and forces them to think about the material as they write. Hettich (1976, 1980) and Anderson (1982) also report success with the use of autobiographical journal entries as a means of

processing class material.

(4)When we begin talking about their final projects for the course, in which they are to unobtrusively observe some social behavior and collect data to analyze and report, they begin by brainstorming in their logs. The brainstorming is guided, they have to be taught how to brainstorm (i.e., I hand out a "Brainstorming Guide" with questions to guide them as they brainstorm in their logs). I found that after using this method of brainstorming in their logs, very few individual conferences were requested for help in choosing a topic for their projects.

Graded Writing Assignments.

The students are required to turn in five writing assignments throughout the semester, each of the assignments building upon the previous one. Each paper is returned with ample feedback about style, format, references and citations, as well as content. This feedback is then used to improve their next paper. The first two assignments require them to analyze journal articles, learning to use psychological literature. The last three assignments comprise the final project, in which they design an unobtrusive observational study, collect data, and write a formal research report.

The primary purpose of these assignments is to give the students a tool with which to think about the class material, to apply it to their own lives, to force them to understand it in order to write about it, and to teach them to use methods of scientific inquiry. These assignments teach them to use the psychological literature to pursue their own interests and questions, and to actually experience the difference between systematic observation of social phenomena and the casual observations we make every day. In other words, the students learn how scientific inquiry works and actually experience the process themselves, in addition to learning theories and concepts written in textbooks by other psychologists. Cole (1982) addressed this issue when he wrote "...teaching the methods of psychology is more valuable to the student than the teaching of whatever psychologists 'know' about human behavior at a given point in time....Content changes. It is the modes of inquiry that offer the surest road to the coping skills [necessary for career advancement in today's job market]" (p. 25).

Analyses of Journal Articles.

The first assignment asks them to find and read one of five specified journal articles and to write a 5-page summary and analysis of the article.

The assignment is completely described in a handout, giving them questions to consider as they analyze the article, what audience they should direct their writing toward, and the grading criteria. In addition they are given guides for reading and summarizing journal articles, including questions to consider as they read the article[1].

The second assignment asks them to choose a topic from class, to find three articles in the library on the topic, and to write a 5-7 page paper summarizing the articles and analyzing their relevance to each other, their relevance to social psychology, and their relevance to life outside the laboratory. These assignments are used to teach the students about social psychological "literature", where to find it, how to read it, how to research a specific topic, how to analyze it, and how to write in a psychological format (including citations and references). Again, a complete description of the assignment is handed out, including questions to consider while analyzing the articles, the audience they should direct their writing style toward, and grading criteria. In addition, I give them a guide to finding literature in psychology and a guide to doing references in psychology.

The last three assignments comprise the final project and are the (1)proposal, (2)introduction and methods, and (3)complete research report with abstract and references.

Final Project.

This is the students' favorite part of the course. Each student chooses a social psychological phenomenon of interest to him or her and designs an unobtrusive observational study through which they can examine the phenomenon. They think of a hypothesis, search the literature, collect data, and write a formal research report in APA style. Writing is used throughout the project, beginning with brainstorming in the logs. This brainstorming is a "first draft" of a proposal to be turned in. Students turn in a short proposal in which they describe their idea, give a rationale for choosing it, and their initial ideas for how they might collect data. After the proposal is approved, they do a brief literature search on the topic and write a more formal paper similar in format to the introduction and methods sections of APA research articles. Feedback on this paper is used in improving their designs and methods of data collection and in improving their introduction and methods sections for their final papers. The final project report is due at the end of the semester. This paper is written in formal APA style, including an Abstract and References. Because the writing is done in steps, through the proposal and the literature review and methods, the final papers are much easier for the students to write, and the products they turn in are significantly better than when they are merely told to "write a term paper."

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1. Copies of all assignments and guides are available from the author:
Sara E. Snodgrass, Department of Psychology, Skidmore College,
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Extensive handouts are prepared to lead the students through the project. They are given an overall description of the entire project, the brainstorming guide, a description of what I want in the proposal, a thorough description of the introduction and methods sections with a step-by-step guide to preparing it, and a guide to the format of the completed report.

The students get very excited about this project, and course evaluations reveal that this is one of the "best" parts of the course in their opinions. They often comment about how, even though the project is one of the most challenging things they have done, it did not seem so overwhelming a task as typical term papers or final projects, because of being led through it step-by-step and being given feedback throughout. Also, the due dates of the three parts prevents them from leaving it all until the end of the semester. (The majority of the students are sophomores).

From the teacher's viewpoint, I am extremely pleased with the improved quality of the final papers I receive now, as compared to when my assignment was to "write a term paper" or to "do a research project." The papers are much more carefully written, more reflective of their knowledge of social psychology, and more interesting to read. The students' grades on their final projects are much better as a result of feedback on smaller portions of it.

Second Thoughts.

Although I am firmly convinced that incorporating writing throughout the course as part of the process of learning as was done in this course is very successful, I admit that there are some negative aspects. The feedback on each assignment is tremendously time-consuming. In order for this to work as intended, each paper must have ample feedback about writing skills, style, content, format, etc. so that the student can correct as many problems in the next paper as possible. Initially, creating all the guides and handouts took an inordinate amount of time, but I now know it was worth it. The papers I receive are much more interesting to read, are almost always the type of paper I intended, and are much better written, more thoughtful, and more reflective of their understanding of the social psychological concepts than before.

The first class in which I used these assignments had 30 students. I was exhausted at the end of the semester, but very satisfied with the class. The following semester I had 60 students enrolled in two sections of the class (apparently all the writing did not scare the students away!). In an attempt at self-preservation, I decided to cut the number of writing assignments on which I had to give such detailed feedback by giving the

students a grading option. Those who wanted an A for the course had to make an A average and do the final project with the three writing assignments to be turned in (proposal, introduction and methods which included journal article analysis, and final research report). Those who wanted a B had to make a B average or above and had to do a library paper (a slightly enlarged version of assignment #2 described above under "Analyses of Journal Articles"). Those satisfied with a C or less could get by with taking the three tests, and doing no writing other than test questions. My plan was that I would get only the best students doing the more extensive writing assignments. My plan failed. Initially, 78% of the students chose option A, to do the final project. After the proposal assignment, I "encouraged" several of them to take their topics and do library papers instead, and over time several more dropped the research project. I ended up with 64% of the class doing the extensive writing assignments. Half of these students made B or C for the course and knew that they had no chance for an A, yet chose to do the project anyway. Apparently, the students are not as prone to take the easy-way-out as we may have believed! I think that this "failure" of my plan to ease my work-load provides strong evidence that using writing as a tool in the process of learning social psychology is appealing to students, and that the improved papers, test grades, and class participation are evidence that it works.

The students learn much more about social psychology by using these writing techniques. They are actively involved in the material, and writing "forces" them to think about it and to relate it to their own lives. Examinations are better because the students have actively worked with the material. They leave the course not only knowing much of the content of social psychology, but feeling confident that they can use the psychological literature in the future, having great respect for research as a result of their own studies, knowing how to write a psychological paper, and having increased confidence in their own abilities to analytically think about psychological concepts.

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Spiegel, T. A., Cameron, S. M., Evans, R., Nodine, B. F. (1980). Integrating writing into the teaching of psychology: An alternative to Calhoun and Selby. Teaching of Psychology, 7, 242-243.

Dr. S. Snodgrass
PS 205-Social Psychology

PAPER #1- ASSIGNMENT

PURPOSE: To become familiar with the way social psychologists do their work and report it. That is, to acquaint you with psychological journals and the style and format of research reports. To learn how to analyze research articles.

ASSIGNMENT: Read the handout entitled "How to Read An Original Source Journal Article". Choose one journal article from the list below. Locate the article in the library. Then, using the "Guide to Using Journal Article Summary Sheet" (handed out in class), read the article and, as you read, take notes on the Journal Article Summary sheet. Then write a paper in which you summarize the article and discuss the implications of this research to everyday life.

To summarize the article, use the notes you made on the Summary sheet and write them in the form of a descriptive essay--telling the reader enough to understand the research--why it was done, how it was done, what was found--but don't give unnecessary detail. Write this as though another student in the class were going to be the reader, and this student has not read the article you have chosen. Tell this student about the research so that he or she can understand it (but don't bore him or her with too much detail!).

In discussing the implications, you will want to consider how these results relate to life outside the laboratory. Are there characteristics of the study that might cause it to be inapplicable to "real world" situations? If not, how are the results important in our lives? Think of situations that are different from those in the study that might also relate to these results. Feel free to disagree with any part of the article--the methods used, the ethics, the interpretations the author made about the results. Suggest further research you might think of that needs to be done in this area.

At the end, be sure to list your reference in APA style.

GRADING CRITERIA:

1. How clearly you described the study without giving unnecessary detail.

2. How well you have thought about the implications of the research and have discussed this with your reader.

3. How well-organized and clearly written the paper is. (I will also consider spelling, grammar, neatness of typing, etc.)

DUE DATE: October 4 (no late papers accepted--that's definite!)

LENGTH: Three pages, typed, double-spaced.

ARTICLES: (Choose one)

Freedman, J. L. & Fraser, S. C. (1966). Compliance without pressure: The foot-in-the-door technique. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 4, 195-202.

Goldberg, P. A., Gottesdiener, M. & Abramson, P. R. (1975). Another put-down of women? Perceived attractiveness as a function of support for the feminist movement. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 32, 113-115.

Sigall, H. & Ostrove, N. (1975). Beautiful but dangerous: Effects of offender attractiveness and nature of the crime on juridic judgement. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 31, 410-414.

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Zanna, M., Sheras, P.L., Cooper, J., & Shaw, C. (1975). Pygmalion and Galatea: The interactive effect of teacher and student expectancies. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 11, 279-287.

Dr. S. Snodgrass
PS 205-Social Psychology
Skidmore College

Guide to Using Journal Article Summary Sheets

I. Be sure to fill in completely all the information at the top of the sheet because you will need this for your reference list.

II. The introduction is the first part of the main article. It tells you why this research was done. It tells you what has been learned in previous related research and what this researcher hypothesized. After reading the introduction, before reading the Methods section, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the hypothesis (the question the researcher hopes to answer with this research)? Be sure you can say it in your own words. Write down on the Article Summary sheet a paraphrase of the hypothesis. (Be sure to enclose in quotation marks anything you are copying from the article so that you will know later what is the author's words and what is your own words.)

- Why does he/she hypothesize this? What is the rationale? Did past research leave this particular question unanswered? Did the author's own experience lead him/her to hypothesize this? What did the past research tell us? Write only a brief paragraph summarizing what you understand to be the rationale underlying this particular study.

III. The method section explains exactly how the researcher did the study. The details are so specific that you could do this study yourself exactly like it was done before. All you, as a reader, want to get out of this section is an understanding of how the study was done. Later, you may refer back to this to find out some details, but now just get the broad picture.

- Who were the subjects? (sex? college students? volunteer? etc.?)

- What was the design of the study? Was there a control group? Several different treatment groups? What was the "treatment" given to each group, if any? (These were the independent variables.) Was the study an experiment or correlational study or survey? Laboratory or field? etc.?

- What were the materials used? Were tests given to the subjects? Was there equipment used to measure anything?

III. methods section (continued)

- What was measured? The outcome of a test? Physiological responses? Some behavior made by the subject? Was something counted? (These were the dependent variables.)

- What was the procedure? What did the subjects do? What were the instructions given to the subjects? (Just briefly paraphrase the procedure on your summary sheet, don't try to cover all details.)

- How does this method address the hypothesis, or the major question(s) of the researcher?

IV. The results section is the most difficult to read and understand, since most psychological research is statistical or quantitative in orientation. Don't feel you have to understand all the statistical jargon or numbers. Look at the tables. Look for the p-values, or significance levels. If they are .05 or less (.01 or .001, etc.), then the researcher's hypothesis was most likely supported. When you see a p-value being reported, look for what the words right before it or right after it say was found by this analysis. With a little experience, results sections become easier to interpret. Just summarize on your summary sheet what you think the results of the study were.

V. In the discussion section the author discusses the interpretations, implications, meanings of the results. Also, the problems with the research are discussed here (no research is perfect!). You are more interested at this point in the interpretations of the results by the author. Briefly summarize the author's interpretations. Do you agree that this is what the results mean? There are often several ways to interpret results of studies, do you think another interpretation is more plausible? This is where your own personal thoughts and reactions come in. Take some time right now to think about the study you just read and write your reaction on your summary sheet (or an additional sheet if you have more reactions than there is room!) Was the study valid? Did the researcher measure what he or she intended to measure? Do you see any problems with the methodology used by this researcher? What do you think the implications of the research are? What research do you think should be done next, to further investigate the basic questions addressed here? Don't take all psychological research at face value--examine it, question it, reinterpret it--that's what science is all about!

Dr. S. Snodgrass
PS 205-Social Psychology
Skidmore College

Journal Article Summary

Author(s):_____.

Year:_____.

Title:_____

_____.

Journal:_____,

Volume #:_____, Pages:_____-_____.

Hypothesis or hypotheses (paraphrase):

Rationale for study:

Method: subjects (number, sex, age, how recruited, etc.):

design (control group? treatment groups? etc.):

Method (continued)materials (tests given, equipment used, etc.):

dependent variables (what was measured?):

procedure:

Results: (what did they find out? was hypothesis supported?
were statistical analyses significant? etc.):

Discussion:

PS 205 - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY - FALL, 1984 - Dr. Snodgrass
PAPER #2

PURPOSE: To learn how to locate journal articles on a specific topic (using Psychological Abstracts, references from other books or articles, etc.) and to critically discuss the topic as presented in different articles.

ASSIGNMENT: Choose a topic from the text that interests you. An interesting topic to choose might be one of the following: (1)a topic that seems to you to be controversial, or (2) something in the text with which you strongly agree or disagree, or (3) some research method that you think has questionable ethics, or (4)a topic that seems to have particular relevance to your own life, or (5)a topic about which you want to learn more than was covered in the text or in class.

Using the Journal Article Summary Sheet, read and summarize the articles you have chosen. Then write an essay in which you briefly describe the studies and discuss the issues that you find interesting. In your discussion, you might want to consider some of the following questions (please don't merely answer these questions, rather, use these questions to guide your thinking as you read the articles and write your first draft):
---What do these studies have to say about your topic? How do they contribute to an understanding of the basic social psychological concepts? How do they build upon what was known before?
---How do the articles you chose relate to each other? Do they agree in their findings? Do they contradict each other? Do they build upon each other?
---Do you see any problems with the methodology used? the ethics? the conclusions drawn?
---What do you think is the next step in researching this topic? What studies should be done to extend the findings of this research?
---What are the implications of the findings in these articles? How do they relate to the "real world" outside the laboratory? How do they relate to your own life?

AUDIENCE: Imagine that your reader is a student in this class. Therefore, the reader knows something about social psychology (as much as you know!) and so you can assume he/she knows some of the terms (e.g., dependent/independent variable, control group, etc.). However, he/she doesn't know all the jargon you might find in the articles you read. Also, he/she probably chose a different topic, so will not know what you know about this topic. Make your paper interesting to read so that this fellow student will enjoy reading it. Try to make him/her think, to become aware of something he/she probably hasn't thought of before. Show him/her why you think this topic is interesting and important.

GRADING CRITERIA:

- clarity of description of studies (appropriate to your audience)
- thoughtfulness of discussion (in relation to some of the questions above)
- perception of implications of the studies to the "real world"
- writing style, organization; i.e., readability
- neatness, correct spelling, punctuation, etc.
- correctness of citations and references (APA style as in handout)

DUE DATE: October 27 (no late papers accepted)

LENGTH: 5-10 pages, typed, double-spaced.

TIPS:

- Psychology Today is not considered a professional journal.
- Psychological Reports is not a very respected psychological journal. Try to find your articles in other journals. The most respected are Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Journal of Personality, Journal of Social Psychology, and our library has lots of other very respected ones.
- Do not wait until the last week to begin your paper. You do yourself an injustice to turn in a first draft of a paper. Write it, then put it aside a few days, then read it again and revise it. Also, be sure to allow time to proofread it after it is typed and to get the mistakes corrected. A sloppy paper makes a poor impression and detracts from the content.

HOW TO FIND LITERATURE IN PSYCHOLOGY

S. Snodgrass
1983

The first step in writing a paper in psychology is often the most difficult, and that is deciding on your topic. This guide will assume that you have accomplished that step, and that your topic is narrow enough to address in a paper.

I will give you my own method for approaching a "literature review". This may not be the standard way, but it works for me.

I. Look up your topic in an introductory text book. If it is a topic in social psychology, look in a social psychology text. Better, yet, look in several different texts. Be sure to use very recent texts--nothing older than three years. See what these texts say about your topic and write down the references that are given on your topic. Find the full references in the reference list in the back of the book and write them down just as they appear there. If you just take notes and leave out some of the stuff, you will get to the library and find out that you don't know how to locate the reference!

II. Ask your professor if she or he knows of any references, any studies, any books that deal with your topic. Ask any professor who might have any knowledge about your topic. That's what they are there for!

III. Go to the library and look up the references you have gotten from the textbooks and from the professors. If you aren't sure how to find some of the references in the library, do not hesitate to ask for help from one of the librarians. That's what they are there for!

IV. If there are some references that are not in the library,but look like they definitely relate to your topic, order them through inter-library loan (ask the librarian if you don't know how that works). Do this as soon as possible because it takes time to get them through inter-library loan.

V. Everytime you find something that was referenced, scan it to see if it is pertinent to your topic. To decide whether an article is pertinent to your topic, you must have a clear hypothesis in mind or a clear theme around which you are building your paper. You may begin your literature review with a fuzzy idea of your topic--if so, you have to first use your literature search to see what has been written about your topic (stick with recent articles), and then zero-in on your specific idea. Then you have to go back to begin your literature search with a more directed topic!

Let's say you have a specific idea now. To decide whether an article is pertinent, ask the following questions: Is this article part of the background for your hypothesis or theme--does it lead toward your idea or does it, in conjunction with other research, lay the groundwork for your idea?

V. (continued) Does the methodology used relate to your theme--either methodology you will use yourself or methodology you want to criticize or expand upon? Does this study contradict or support your theme or hypothesis? If it does none of these things, it is probably not pertinent.

There are lots of articles that initially sound as if they were related to your topic, but actually contribute nothing to the argument you are building. You might make a short note about them so that you can find them again later if your literature review takes you into a different direction in which this article may be pertinent. While "weeding out" the articles that really add nothing to your argument, keep an open mind--the process of finding literature may change your argument or hypothesis and send you into a different, and better, direction.

VI. If you decide that this article is pertinent, then either make a copy of it or use the Journal Article Summary forms I have provided to take notes on the article. (Be sure in your notes to distinguish quotations of the original source and paraphrasings of the original source from your own ideas and interpretations!)

VII. Next, look at the references given at the end of this article to find additional references to look up on your topic. Get the idea? You are working backwards--looking up references given by the authors of the referenced articles you find! This backwards search can go on forever. If you pursue it 'forever', you will find that the articles begin to reference each other, and the path becomes circular.

VIII. Look especially for references to "review" articles. Psychological Bulletin and Psychological Review are primary sources for review articles, but they often appear in other journals and as chapters in books. If you can find a fairly recent review article, you have a great source for references!

IX. When this process seems to boggle down or to lead to dead ends or in circles, then go to Psychological Abstracts in the Reference Room of the library and look up your topic in the Index volumes of the Abstracts. Here you will find "more than you ever wanted to know" in the way of references. I give you this step last because it is often overwhelming if you go to Psych Abstracts first. But by now, you are familiar with "the literature" enough that you can tell what is pertinent to your topic and what is not.

X. Look back over the references you have been looking up. Are there certain journals that have been referenced more than others? Usually articles on certain topics tend to find their way into the same two or three journals. Go to the shelves where the current issues of journals are kept and just look through the tables of contents of the last two years' issues of those two or three predominant journals. You will probably find the most current work on your topic there. It takes about two years for abstracts to get into Psyc Abstracts, so the only way to find the really recent work is to do this step!

If you have completed all ten steps, you have as thorough a literature review as any professor could expect!

Now, the problem is: What to do with all this?! Here are some guidelines for synthesizing all this literature into a coherent paper:

I. Be absolutely sure that you know what notes you have taken in your own words and what is quoted from the original source. Also, be sure you know when you have closely paraphrased the original source. You don't want to be accused of plagiarism, and the only way to be sure to avoid it is to give credit where credit is due. But guidelines for giving credit will be addressed in a different "How To" guide.

II. The style of your literature review will differ depending upon the assignment. The introductory section of a research report is quite different from an exhaustive literature review. Look at published articles that are similar in style to what you want to write to see just how to approach your paper. If you are to write a thorough review, look in Psychological Bulletin and Psychological Review for ideas. Whatever the style of your literature review, the following questions will help you get started (from Rosenthal & Constantian):

Is this topic of longstanding interest to people in the field or is it relatively new? What is the history of theories on the topic, if any?

What are the different kinds of approaches that people have taken to study this phenomenon (e.g. different methodologies, different theoretical approaches)?

Are the various researchers making the same assumptions, addressing the same questions? If not, can you abstract some of the more important underlying themes? Do the various researchers agree on what is important about the topic?

What findings seem to be consistent throughout the set of studies that you are reviewing? What findings are inconsistent? Can you resolve the discrepancies in the results? For example, are differing results a function of different methodologies, different dependent variables, etc.? Are some results quite consistent, but the researchers' interpretations differ? Can you propose some research that might begin to clarify some of the ambiguities?

What questions remain unanswered in this area? What do you consider to be some of the more promising directions for future research?

III. If you are writing an introduction to a research report, you do not want to refer to all the literature in the area (although you have read so much of it!), but you only want to include that which relates to your own hypothesis and study. You will want to describe what has been done in the past on the topic, but only in a general overview, briefly summarizing. Then you will want to tell your reader why the study you have done is important. It may be to clarify some ambiguities in past research-- briefly describe the ambiguous research. It may be to test two inconsistent theories about the topic-- succinctly describe the research that led to those theories. It may be to answer questions that have been left unanswered by past research-- briefly tell about some of the research that led you to ask these questions--research that led up to your study. It may be to use a different methodology from past studies to test the generalizability of those findings-- succinctly describe the methodology used previously.

When writing an introduction to a research report, use the "hour glass" design (Bem, in Kidder, 1981). Begin broadly, setting the problem being investigated into a larger context that establishes its general significance. Then get more and more specific until you are ready to introduce your own hypothesis and an overview of your study. Lead your reader up to your study in a way that he or she will be expecting it, will be saying, "Well, of course this study needs to be done!" Build a case for your study.

IV. If you are writing a thorough literature review, then you will want to address most of the questions in II above. You will include more references to past research than when writing an introduction to a research report. Do not report the literature in chronological order--that is so boring! Organize the literature by relationship instead. The APA Publication Manual, 3rd edition, (p.21), suggests the following format for organizing a review article:

- define and clarify the problem
- summarize previous investigations in order to inform the reader of the state of current research
- identify relations, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature
- suggest the next step or steps in solving the problem.

HOW TO DO REFERENCES IN PSYCHOLOGY

S. Snodgrass
Fall, 1983

You must clearly indicate any sections of your paper that are not your own original writing. This includes someone else's ideas you are describing and paraphrases of someone else's writing, as well as direct quotations. Plagiarism is theft, just as much as bank embezzlement. Reading an idea in a book or an article and then including it in your paper as if it were your own idea is plagiarism. Paraphrasing what someone else has written without giving the source is plagiarism. Copying passages from another source -- whether an articulate phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph -- without proper citation is plagiarism. To avoid plagiarism, you absolutely must give references for any and all ideas and writing that are not gained through your own independent research and reflection.

I. How to indicate citations within the text.

Ideas and Paragraphs. Examples:

1. Jones' (1978) interpretation of the results of the study suggested that.....

2. This phenomenon might be explained by the lack of motivation among the subjects (Jones, 1978).

3. According to Jones (1978), this may be explained as.....

4. This phenomenon indicates, as Jones (1978) suggested, that the subjects.....

You may include the idea in your text in almost any way you like, only give Jones credit for it!

Direct Quotations.

Anytime you use a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph written by someone else (less than 40 words long), you must enclose it in quotations marks, and give the source directly following the quotation. The citation must include the page number(s) from the original source. Examples:

1. This result may be a "fluke of nature" (Jones, 1978, p. 33) and must be replicated to be believed.

2. Ardrey (1970), in his essays on aggression wrote, "Pornography and riot are of a piece. They are means of stimulation" (p. 42).

3. "Pornography and riot are of a piece. They are means of stimulation" (Ardrey, 1970, p. 42).

If the quotation is longer than forty words, begin the quotation on a new line and indent the entire quotation five spaces, using no quotation marks.

Rules about citations:

In psychology, footnotes are not used for references. Footnotes are (infrequently) used for comments that would otherwise disrupt the continuity of the text. We do not number our citations (with numbers indicating a reference listed in a footnote). Rather, we put the last name of the author right in the text and give the date of the publication. Then we alphabetize all references at the end of the paper. There are certain rules to be followed in putting the citations in the text:

1. Always enclose the date (year) in parentheses: Jones (1978)

2. Also enclose the author's name if you are not using the name as part of your sentence: As Jones (1978) indicated..... or, One explanation may be...(blah,blah)...(Jones, 1978).

3. When the citation is at the end of a sentence, put the period after the citation, not before it.

4. List last names only, unless you are referencing two or more people with the same last name, then give the first initial: (Smith, S. Jones, & J. Jones, 1978).

5. If more than one author, list all names (you cannot get off easy by using et al. until the second time you cite the same source in your paper!): (Jones, Brown, Smith, 1978). List the names in the same order in which they appear on the original article, not necessarily alphabetically!

How to write out the references in the reference list

In the reference list, list all sources you have cited in the text. Don't list those you haven't cited in the text, even though you may have read them!

Put references in alphabetical order by first author's last name. If citing more than one work by the same author, list them in order chronologically, that is, put the earliest one first and the most recent one last.

Use the reference list at the end of your textbook as a guide. This reference list will have just about any type of reference you will use. (Italics in your book means you should underline).

Following are a few examples:

(1) Book:

Put last name, initials (not first name), year published, title (underlined with only the first word capitalized), city in which published (and state if not a commonly known city), name of publisher.

Jones, S. T. (1978). Social psychology. New York: Booksey Publishing Company.

(Put periods after author, date, title, and at end. Enclose date in parentheses. Put a colon between city and publisher's name).

(2) Chapter in edited book:

Jones, S.T. (1978). Elbows and personality. In B. Brown (Ed.), Book of Elbow Studies (pp. 320-335). Podunk, Va.: Bookery Publishing Co.

(3) Article in journal:

1. Don't underline the title of the article and don't put the title in quotation marks.
2. Capitalize only the first word of the article title and the first word following a colon, if any. All other words in the title begin with lowercase letters.
3. Underline the title of the journal and capitalize each word.
4. Don't give publisher
5. Do give page numbers
6. Don't write "Vol.", just give the volume number and underline it.
7. Don't give the journal number "No." - volume and pages are sufficient.
8. If it is a magazine rather than a journal (such as Psychology Today), give the month after the year: (1981, March)

Examples:

Jones, S. T. (1978). Social behavior and related factors. Journal of Social Behavior, 32, 391-408.

Jones, S. T., Smith, J. D., & Jones, G. S. (1978). The study of the big toe. Journal of Big Toe Studies, 2, 100-110.

For further examples, see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Third Edition.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Fall, 1983
Final Project Assignment

PURPOSE:

To gain some experience with social psychological research. You spend the semester reading about research; now you will try doing research. This project will give you hands-on experience with designing your own research project, collecting data, analyzing data, and writing a research report. It will give you the opportunity to systematically observe social behavior and to explore the relationship of variables in which you are interested.

ASSIGNMENT:

Design and carry out a nonexperimental naturalistic social psychological study. Your study should involve systematically observing behavior in a natural setting without intervention or the use of deception. You are to develop a hypothesis about some naturally occuring phenomenon, observe it and collect data, and write your results in a format similar to that in psychological journals. Be creative in coming up with your hypothesis. The project should be fun, but it is essential that you work ahead--you cannot save it until the last minute.

We will do the project in steps that build upon each other so that no step is really difficult. The steps and their due dates follow:

1. Decide on your hypothesis and write a 2-4 page proposal to be turned in for feedback. We will have a "brainstorming" session in class to get you started with your ideas, and you will receive a detailed description of what is expected in the proposal. DUE OCTOBER 25.

2. Do a literature search on your topic to find out what has been done before and to "build a case" for your own hypothesis. Follow the guide to literature reviews that was handed out earlier.

3. Decide on your methodology--just exactly how you are going to collect your data. Precisely what behavior are you going to observe, where are you going to observe it, when are you going to observe it, how are you going to analyse this data? Feel free to come talk with Dr. Snodgrass for help in planning your methodology.

4. Write an introduction (based on the literature review) and a methods section for your final project. This should be in the format that you find in journal articles. This will be a "draft"--you will get feedback from Dr. Snodgrass that may change what you actually do in your project, and you may decide to make changes on your own as you begin collecting data. However, this paper should be in a final form so that the changes will be minimal when writing your final paper. INTRODUCTION AND METHODS SECTION DUE NOVEMBER 10.

5. After getting feedback from Dr. Snodgrass about your methods, begin collecting data. You should have completed all your data collection no later than Nov. 28 . (You may choose to collect your data at home over Thanksgiving).

6. Analyze your data so that you can present your results in the final paper. You may calculate means, do correlations, test the difference between means with a t-test, etc. See Dr. Snodgrass for help--you are not expected to know statistics, but your results will be more interesting to you if you learn how to analyze them. Allow two-three days for this.

7. Write your final report. DO NOT SAVE THIS UNTIL THE DAY BEFORE IT IS DUE. You need to write a draft and then go back to it a day or so later and edit it, rewrite parts that are not clear, clean up spelling, etc. You do yourself an injustice when you turn in the first draft of a paper!! This paper will be in the format of a journal article. See the handout on "How to read an original source journal article" for the format. This report should be 10-25 pages, depending upon your project. The length is not important. The content is important. FINAL REPORT DUE DECEMBER 13.

GRADING CRITERIA:

1. Clarity, originality, creativity, and testability of your hypothesis.

2. Use of literature for rationale for your study. How well you have incorporated past literature in "building a case" for your hypothesis.

3. How well your methodology addresses your hypothesis--are you actually measuring what you think you are measuring? Is your methodology well-designed and clear?

4. The presentation of your results. Do you make it easy for your reader to understand just what you found? Is your interpretation of your results logical? Do you discuss the implications of your findings and any problems with your study?

5. Correct inclusion of references in APA style.

6. Overall organization and clarity of writing.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Fall, 1983
Final Project Brainstorming Guide

To help you choose a topic for your final project that you will find interesting and fun to work on, take out your logs and write answers to the following questions:

1. What are some of the things you notice about people as you "people-watch" out in Case Commons, in the cafeteria, in Case center, in downtown Saratoga, in shopping malls, etc.? Is there anything that comes to mind that you have noticed and wondered about, or found fascinating? If so, is there a question in your mind about this phenomenon? Is there something that you have wondered about? "I wonder if they are thinking....", "I wonder if they would behave the same way if....", "I wonder if they are doing that because....", etc.?

2. What are some of the topics in your social psychology text book that have particularly interested you? What about those topics was most interesting? Was there anything you wondered about as you read that part of the text? Did something come to mind as you read that you could relate to your own experience? Was there a study that you found particularly fascinating? Can you think of a variation to that study that would be interesting to do?

3. As you think of these things, does some question come to mind about the relationship of two or more variables? In other words, do you think that some behavior may be caused by, or connected to something (such as the weather, the sex of the other person, the location, the way they are standing or sitting, the way someone looks at them, etc., etc., etc.)? What is the behavior that you are thinking about? This might be your dependent variable! What is it you think might have an effect on that behavior? That might be your independent variable!

4. Is the behavior something you might be able to observe unobtrusively? (You don't want to manipulate your subjects in this study--in fact, they won't even know that they are being "subjects"!). Can you think of some way to observe the behavior of people and count some specific behavior(s) to "test out" your idea?

Now you are on your way to a topic for your final project. We will use these questions with each other in class and help each other decide on a topic.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Fall, 1983
Assignment #3 - Final Project Proposal

Write a 2-4 page (typed, double-spaced) paper describing the research you want to do for your final project for the class. This is to be a proposal, your initial ideas for your research, not a completed design. You are not expected to have done any extensive library work at this time. Instead, just write about your ideas and how you might approach the study. You may suggest more than one idea at this time, if you are trying to decide between several. The purpose is for you to get feedback on your initial ideas before proceeding.

First, just write your ideas, thinking as you go. Use writing as a tool for thinking. Often, as I write, my thoughts become clearer and even change directions in mid-writing! Use this assignment as a process for thinking through your ideas. This will be your first draft (or second, third, etc.) of your final project proposal.

However, I want you to turn in to me a later draft--after you have thought through your ideas on paper, then write 2-4 pages in which you state, as clearly as you can, your topic, your hypothesis or hypotheses, the rationale for your research, and your initial ideas for the method you will use to conduct the study.

The proposal you turn in will include:

Topic - In a sentence or two, clearly state the topic, or area of focus, of your study.

Rationale - tell why you think this will be an interesting and valuable study. Where did you get the idea? From personal experience? From other studies you have read about? How will your study make a contribution to social psychology, to our knowledge about social interaction?

Hypothesis - state your hypothesis as a testable proposition. What are the independent variable(s) and dependent variable(s)? Just how do you predict that the variables will relate? Be as explicit as you can.

Methodology - give a rough idea of how you think this hypothesis can be tested in an observational study. What behaviors do you think you will want to observe (to count)? Where do you think you will do the study? You don't have to be terribly explicit here, but let me know that you have thought through how you might go about testing your hypothesis.

Keep in mind that this is a proposal, not a final design. You are writing this to get your ideas clearer and better organized, and to get feedback regarding how "do-able" such a study may be. Your ideas will change many times before your study is complete--in fact, you may change your topic and/or hypotheses entirely before you actually begin your study! So don't feel locked-in with what you write in this proposal.

Due date: October 25)

4. Look at the methods section of any journal article (research report) and write your methods section the same way. You want to describe your methods so explicitly that someone else could copy exactly what you did based upon this description. Therefore, you can't say "I observed reactions to conversation", but must state exactly what reactions you observed such as smiles, comments made in response, eye contact, etc.

5. Be sure to include a reference list in APA style at the end of the paper, listing all references that were cited in the introduction or methods sections.

6. Include as an attached appendix, your data collection sheet. This is what you have designed for your data collection. You will want to have space to enter data broken down into sections for all your independent variables. We will discuss this in class to make it clearer.

LENGTH: Length will vary depending upon your topic. I would expect no less than 2 pages of introduction, and most projects will have more. I would think the methods section might run anywhere from one page to several, depending upon how complex your study will be.

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, in the format of journal articles (don't try to make the methods section small and tight as in the journals, keep it double-spaced, as well).

DUE DATE: November 10. Don't be late! You can't begin collecting data until I get this back to you with my feedback, and time is getting tight for completing the final project!

HINT: Look at the handout entitled "How To Read an Original Source Journal Article" for descriptions of what is found in an introduction and methods section.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
FALL 1984
Introduction and Methods for Final Project

PURPOSE: To explore the psychological literature on your chosen topic in order to find out what has been done in the past, the various methodologies used, the various theoretical approaches, etc., and to "build a case" for your own hypothesis based upon past research. In addition, to explicitly define the method you intend to use in your data collection so that you will think through any problems with the methodology and so you can get feedback before actually beginning to collect data.

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Using the guide entitled "How to Find Literature in Psychology" do a literature review on the topic you have chosen for your final project. You are not doing an "exhaustive" literature review of the area, but you are trying to find past research that relates to your hypothesis. You want to "build a case" for your hypothesis by choosing past research that leads up to your hypothesis or supports or contradicts your hypothesis. Also, you want to include any past research that uses methodology you intend to use.

2. Write an introduction to your final project based upon this literature. The introduction should begin with a general statement about the area, its importance or general impact (this is rather abstract, nothing specific yet). Then give a very brief and general description of your study. Then begin reviewing the literature that supports or leads up to your hypothesis. You want to lead your reader through a thought process in which he or she says "Yes, I see why this is an important area, I see that this was found and that was found and this was not clearly established. Therefore, I see that the next logical step is to do this study--of course, the author will do this very study!!" Do you get the idea? You are "building a case" for you particular study. The introduction section will start out very general and abstract and will become more and more specific until finally you state your own very specific hypothesis. Then give a description of your study, sort of an overview of the method.

3. Decide on the exact methodology you will use in collecting your data. Come see Dr. Snodgrass if you need help. You want to decide on how many subjects you will observe, in what situations you will observe them, exactly what you will manipulate (if anything), and exactly what behaviors you will observe--that is, what you will count (your dependent variable). You want to decide exactly what you are going to compare with what, how you are going to control extraneous variables, etc.

4. Look at the methods section of any journal article (research report) and write your methods section the same way. You want to describe your methods so explicitly that someone else could copy exactly what you did based upon this description. Therefore, you can't say "I observed reactions to conversation", but must state exactly what reactions you observed such as smiles, comments made in response, eye contact, etc.

5. Be sure to include a reference list in APA style at the end of the paper, listing all references that were cited in the introduction or methods sections. You have been given a guide for doing references in psychology - please read this and follow it. We do references and citations differently than sociologists or the humanities.

6. Include as an attached appendix, your data collection sheet. This is what you have designed for your data collection. You will want to have space to enter data broken down into sections for all your independent variables. We will discuss this in class to make it clearer.

LENGTH: Length will vary depending upon your topic. I would expect no less than 2 pages of introduction, and most projects will have more. I would think the methods section might run anywhere from one page to several, depending upon how complex your study will be.

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, in the format of journal articles (i.e., put Method in the center of the page as a heading for your methods sections and have subsections for subjects, procedure, etc.). Don't try to make the methods section small and tight as in the journals, keep it double-spaced, as well.

DUE DATE: October 25. Don't be late! You can't begin collecting data until I get this back to you with my feedback.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Spring, 1984
Dr. S. Snodgrass, Instructor

Format for Final Project Report

Turn in your report on paper other than onion skin. If you use onion skin paper for typing, then please make a good, dark photocopy to turn in. Double-space everything, even the references. Proofread the typed copy carefully, and neatly make corrections in typing, spelling, etc. (You may write in the corrections, if there are not too many and you can make it neat). You want the entire paper to look neat and impressive so as to give the content of the paper the best chance!

1. Title page

   Center the title of your study and your name.

2. Abstract

   Summarize your report in 100-200 words. Center the word "Abstract" at the top of the page. Give the basic research question (hypothesis), subjects and method, results, and implications. Sometimes this is the hardest part to write. Do it last, but put it first, and on a separate page. (Remember to double-space this too).

3. Introduction (2-6 pages)

   Begin this on a new page, and put the title of the paper at the top of the page. Be sure to incorporate the suggestions made on your first draft of the introduction and methods, and find new references, if needed. Sometimes, the results will reflect something interesting that was not introduced in the first draft and you may want to find some literature that relates to these unexpected findings. Please avoid the use of sexist language -- the only time "he" is the appropriate pronoun is when you are talking about males only. When you are referring to people of both sexes make that clear.

4. Methods (2-4 pages)

   Begin this section right below the end of the introduction (i.e., don't start a new page), and write the word "Methods" in the center of the page as a heading for this section. Double-space this section the same as all other sections. Be sure to describe in complete detail the methods you actually used in collecting your data. This may have changed somewhat since your first draft. Be sure to put this in past tense, telling what you did, not what you are going to do. And be sure you describe what you did clearly enough that a reader could go out and replicate your study exactly like you did it.

5. Results (1-3 pages)

Center the word "Results" in the center of the page. Do not begin a new page unless you finished the methods section near the bottom of a page. Describe your results in words as well as with numbers. Tell your reader what you found in plain English, and then give the statistics. This is where you will put tables, figures, charts, etc.

6. Discussion (3-6 pages)

Begin this right after the end of the results section with the word "Discussion" centered on the page. This is one of the most important parts of the report--don't slight it. Here you will interpret your results--tell your reader what they mean and what might explain them. You may want to give several alternative explanations for them. You will also want to discuss the implications--why are these results important? How can they be generalized to other situations? You will also use this section to discuss the shortcomings of your research--tell your reader what is wrong with your study before your reader tells you! No research is perfect, so tell your reader what the problems are (confounding variables that you couldn't or didn't control, potential experimenter bias, comparison groups not really comparable, etc., etc.) Also, use this section to suggest where this research might lead -- what needs to be done next to further explore your topic?

7. References

Begin this on a new page. Center the word "References" at the top of the page. Include all references that were cited in the text. Do not include any references that were not cited. USE APA STYLE AS IN THE HANDOUT I GAVE YOU -- please!

8. Appendix

Please turn in all data collection forms or raw data and the draft of your introduction and methods I commented on earlier.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Fall, 1983
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:50-11:20

Dr. S. Snodgrass
Starbuck 108 ext. 334

Goals for course:

- To have an understanding of what social psychology is, the kinds of things studied, how social psychologists go about studying these things, how social psychology relates to our everyday lives.

- To learn how to use social psychological literature, how to access it, how to read it, how to critically analyze and synthesize it.

- To learn and understand the basic concepts underlying social psychology and to become familiar with some of the better known theories and some of the research in social psychology.

Text: Raven, B.H. & Rubin, J.Z. (1983). Social Psychology, 2nd edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Course Requirements:

- Class attendance is expected. Much of the learning in this course will take place through class discussions, class demonstrations (in which you will participate), and in-class assignments. Roll will not be formally taken, but absences will be noted.

- Readings are expected to be done when assigned so that you will be able to particpate in class discussions intelligently.

- The course will incorporate writing throughout. You are required to keep a "course log"--a sort of journal--which we will use throughout the course. This log will be handed in periodically for a quick check. There will be three papers. Details of these assignments will be given out during the term.

- There will be three tests, each covering the material covered in class and readings since the last test. The last test may have one or two discussion questions which will be comprehensive. (Make-up tests will be allowed only with a doctor's excuse, and any make-up exam will most likely be more difficult than the regularly scheduled ones.)

Grades

- The tests will count 40% of your grade.
- The papers will count 40% of your grade.
- Class participation and course logs will count 20% of your grade.
- For pass-fail students, a C- is required to pass.

PS 205-Fall, 1983 Class Schedule

date	topic	reading	assignment due
9/15	Introduction	---	
9/20	Introduction-continued	text, chp.1	
9/22	Research methods	handouts	
9/27	Person perception	text, chp. 3	
9/29	Nonverbal communication	text, chp. 2	
10/4	Self perception	---	PAPER # 1 due
10/6	Attitudes	text, chp. 4	
10/11	Attitude change	text, chp. 5	
10/13	********** TEST # 1 **********		
10/18	Interpersonal attraction	text, chp. 6	
10/20	Final projects session	text, chp. 7	
10/25	Aggression and altruism	text, chp. 8	
10/27	Competition/cooperation	text, chp. 9	PAPER # 2 due
11/1	Powerlessness & control	text, chp. 10	
11/3	Power	---	PROPOSAL due
11/8	********** TEST # 2 **********		
11/10	Final projects session	--revise proposals--	
11/15	Social structure	text, chp. 11	
11/17	Roles	---	INTRODUCTION & METHOD due
11/22	Roles-continued	text, chp. 12	
11/24	THANKSGIVING	--find advertisements--	
11/29	Collective influence	text, chp. 13	
12/1	Influence of media	text, chp. 14	
12/6	Group dynamics	text, chp. 15	
12/8	Conflict resolution	---	FINAL PROJECT due
12/13	Overview	---	
12/15	********** FINAL TEST **********		

SKIDMORE COLLEGE
PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Spring, 1984
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:50-11:20 (section 01)
Tuesday and Thursday, 1:20-2:50 (section 02)

Dr. S. Snodgrass
Starbuck 108 ext. 334

Goals for course:

- To have an understanding of what social psychology is, the kinds of things studied, how social psychologists go about studying these things, how social psychology relates to our everyday lives.

- To learn and understand the basic concepts underlying social psychology and to become familiar with some of the better known theories and some of the research in social psychology.

- To learn how to use social psychological literature, how to access it, how to read it, how to critically analyze and synthesize it.

Text: Raven, B.H. & Rubin, J.Z. (1983). Social Psychology, 2nd edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Course Requirements:

- Class attendance is expected. Much of the learning in this course will take place through class discussions, class demonstrations (in which you will participate), and in-class assignments. Roll will not be formally taken, but absences will be noted.

- Readings are expected to be done when assigned so that you will be able to particpate in class discussions intelligently.

- The course will incorporate writing throughout. You are required to keep a "course log"--a sort of journal--which we will use throughout the course. This log will be handed in periodically for a quick check. There will be an optional paper. Details are given below under "Grades".

- There will be three tests, each covering the material covered in class and readings since the last test. The last test may have one or two discussion questions which will be comprehensive. (Make-up tests will be allowed only with a doctor's excuse, and any make-up exam will most likely be more difficult than the regularly scheduled ones.)

Grades

There are three options for completing this course, each option is graded differently.

A. In order to make an A in the course, you must do a final project in which you develop a hypothesis and design a study in which you unobtrusively observe social interaction, systematically collect data, and write a research report on your project. Detailed instructions will be given out the third week of class. This project will be graded and averaged with your tests to compute your final grade. If you have an A average on all your tests but do not choose to do this project, you will not get an A for the course. If you do not have an A average on your tests, you may still do the project and it will be averaged with your tests for your final grade.

- Three tests count 20% each
- Final project counts 25%
- Class participation and log count 15%.

B. If you do not choose to do the final research project, you may choose to do a library paper in which you find three or more journal articles on a topic of your choice and write a 5-10 page paper in which you analyze the articles. Detailed instructions will be handed out the third week of class. You must do either the final research project or the library paper in order to get a B in the course. This paper will be averaged with your test grades to determine your grade for the course (i.e., a B is not guaranteed by doing the paper). You may not turn in <u>both</u> a library paper and a final research project for separate grades. The final research project will include some library work.

- Three tests count 21% each
- Library paper counts 21%
- Class participation and log count 16%

C. You may choose not to do either paper and to let the three tests and class participation determine your grade. With this option, the highest grade you can get is a C or a P. This is perfectly acceptable -- you will get a basic introduction to the material within Social Psychology, and that may be all you want from the course.

- Three tests count 28% each
- Class participation and log count 16%

For pass-fail students, a C is required to pass.

PS 205-Spring, 1984 Class Schedule

date	topic	reading	assignment due
2/2	Introduction	---	
2/7	Introduction-continued	text, chp.1 and handouts	
2/9	Person perception	text, chp. 3	
2/14	Nonverbal communication	text, chp. 2	
2/16	Attribution & Self perception	---	
2/21	Attitudes	text, chp. 4	
2/23	Attitude change	text, chp. 5	
2/28	********** TEST # 1 **********		
3/1	Interpersonal attraction	text, chp. 6	PROPOSAL due(OPT. A)
3/6	Research methods	text, chp. 7	
3/8	Aggression and Altruism	text, chp. 8	
3/13	Competition/cooperation	text, chp. 9	
3/15	Powerlessness & control	---	INTRO/METH due(OPT. A)
3/17-3/25	SPRING BREAK !!!!!!!!		
3/27	Power	text, chp. 10	
3/29	********** TEST # 2 **********		
4/3	Social structure	text, chp. 11	LIBRARY PAPER due(OPT. B)
4/5	Roles	---	
4/10	Sex Roles	text, chp. 12	
4/12	Sex Roles - continued	---	
4/17	Collective influence	text, chp. 13	
4/19	Influence of media	---	DATA ANALYSIS due(OPT. A)
4/24	Group dynamics	text, chp. 14	
4/26	Conflict resolution	text, chp. 15	
5/1	Environment	text, chp. 16	FINAL PROJECT due(OPT. A)
5/3	Overview	---	
5/8	********** FINAL TEST **********		

PS 205 - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY - SPRING, 1984 - Dr. Snodgrass
LIBRARY PAPER

GRADING OPTION B: In order to get a B in the course, you must write a paper based upon social psychological literature (i.e., journal articles in social psychological journals). This does not guarantee a B, you must do B work. But if you do not do this paper nor a final project, you will not get above a C.

PURPOSE: To learn how to locate journal articles on a specific topic (using Psychological Abstracts, references from other books or articles, etc.) and to critically discuss the topic as presented in different articles.

ASSIGNMENT: Choose a topic from the text that interests you. An interesting topic to choose might be one of the following: (1)a topic that seems to you to be controversial, or (2) something in the text with which you strongly agree or disagree, or (3) some research method that you think has questionable ethics, or (4)a topic that seems to have particular relevance to your own life, or (5)a topic about which you want to learn more than was covered in the text or in class.

Locate a minimum of three articles pertinent to your topic. (See "How to Find Literature in Psychology" for help. However, you are only looking for three or so related articles, not a complete literature review.)

Using the Journal Article Summary Sheet, read and summarize the articles you have chosen. Then write an essay in which you briefly describe the studies and discuss the issues that you find interesting. In your discussion, you might want to consider some of the following questions (please don't merely answer these questions, rather, use these questions to guide your thinking as you read the articles and write your first draft):

- What do these studies have to say about your topic? How do they contribute to an understanding of the basic social psychological concepts? How do they build upon what was known before?
- How do the articles you chose relate to each other? Do they agree in their findings? Do they contradict each other? Do they build upon each other?
- Do you see any problems with the methodology used? the ethics? the conclusions drawn?
- What do you think is the next step in researching this topic? What studies should be done to extend the findings of this research?
- What are the implications of the findings in these articles? How do they relate to the "real world" outside the laboratory? How do they relate to your own life?

AUDIENCE: Imagine that your reader is a student in this class. Therefore, the reader knows something about social psychology (as much as you know!) and so you can assume he/she knows some of the terms (e.g., dependent/independent variable, control group, etc.). However, he/she doesn't know all the jargon you might find in the articles you read. Also, he/she probably chose a different topic, so will not know what you know about this topic. Make your paper interesting to read so that this fellow student will enjoy reading it. Try to make him/her think, to become aware of something he/she probably hasn't thought of before. Show him/her why you think this topic is interesting and important.

GRADING CRITERIA:

- clarity of description of studies (appropriate to your audience)
- thoughtfulness of discussion (in relation to some of the questions above)
- perception of implications of the studies to the "real world"
- writing style, organization; i.e., readability
- neatness, correct spelling, punctuation, etc.
- correctness of citations and references (APA style as in handout)

DUE DATE: April 3 (no late papers accepted)

LENGTH: 5-10 pages, typed, double-spaced.

TIPS:

- Psychology Today is not considered a professional journal.
- Psychological Reports is not a very respected psychological journal. Try to find your articles in other journals. The most respected are Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Journal of Personality, Journal of Social Psychology, and our library has lots of other very respected ones.
- Do not wait until late March to begin your paper. You do yourself an injustice to turn in a first draft of a paper. Write it, then put it aside a few days, then read it again and revise it. Also, be sure to allow time to proofread it after it is typed and to get the mistakes corrected. A sloppy paper makes a poor impression and detracts from the content.

PS 205
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Spring, 1984
Final Project Assignment

GRADING OPTION A: In order to make an A in the course, you must do a final project as described below. You must decide whether you want to do the project in time to turn in a proposal on March 1. No one can make an A who has not turned in a proposal on March 1. In other words, you cannot decide to do a final project after that date. You may, however, turn in a proposal on March 1 and then later decide not to complete the project, but to take options B or option C instead. If in doubt - write a proposal!

PURPOSE: To gain some experience with social psychological research. You spend the semester reading about research; now you will try doing research. This project will give you hands-on experience with designing your own research project, collecting data, analyzing data, and writing a research report. It will give you the opportunity to systematically observe social behavior and to explore the relationsnip of variables in which you are interested.

ASSIGNMENT: Design and carry out a nonexperimental naturalistic social psychological study. Your study should involve systematically observing behavior in a natural setting without intervention or the use of deception. You are to develop a hypothesis about some naturally occuring phenomenon, observe it and collect data, and write your results in a format similar to that in psychological journals. Be creative in coming up with your hypothesis. The project should be fun, but it is essential that you work ahead--you cannot save it until the last minute.

We will do the project in steps that build upon each other so that no step is really difficult. The steps and their due dates follow:

1. Decide on your hypothesis and write a 2-4 page proposal to be turned in for feedback. A detailed description of what is expected in the proposal will be handed out in class on February 21. PROPOSAL DUE MARCH 1.

2. Do a literature search on your topic to find out what has been done before and to "build a case" for your own hypothesis. Follow the guide to literature reviews that was handed out earlier. (You are not doing an extensive literature review, but you want to be familiar with what has been done before and to build a rationale for your study.)

3. Decide on your methodology--just exactly how you are going to collect your data. Precisely what behavior are you going to observe, where are you going to observe it, when are you going to observe it, how are you going to analyze this data? Feel free to come talk with Dr. Snodgrass for help in planning your methodology.

4. Write an introduction (based on the literature review) and a methods section for your final project. This should be in the format that you find in journal articles. This will be a "draft"--you will get feedback from Dr. Snodgrass that may change what you actually do in your project, and you may decide to make changes on your own as you begin collecting data. However, this paper should be in a final form so that the changes will be minimal when writing your final paper. INTRODUCTION AND METHODS SECTION DUE MARCH 15 unless you plan to collect data over spring break. In that case your introduction and methods are DUE MARCH 9 so you can get feedback before collecting data.

5. After getting feedback from Dr. Snodgrass about your methods, begin collecting data. You should have completed all your data collection no later than April 10.

6. Analyze your data so that you can present your results in the final paper. You may calculate means, do correlations, test the difference between means with a t-test, etc. See Dr. Snodgrass for help--you are not expected to know statistics, but your results will be more interesting to you if you learn how to analyze them. Some class time will be allotted for going over simple statistics and you will be given handouts explaining how to do them. Allow 1-2 weeks for data analysis. You will turn in your data analysis for a quick check - DUE APRIL 19.

7. Write your final report. DO NOT SAVE THIS UNTIL THE DAY BEFORE IT IS DUE. You need to write a draft and then go back to it a day or so later and edit it, rewrite parts that are not clear, clean up spelling, etc. You do yourself an injustice when you turn in the first draft of a paper!! This paper will be in the format of a journal article. There will be a handout on the correct format for the paper. This report should be typed, double-spcaed, 10-25 pages, depending upon your project. The length is not important. The content is important. FINAL REPORT DUE MAY 1 - NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.

GRADING CRITERIA:

1. Clarity, originality, creativity, and testability of your hypothesis.

2. Use of literature for rationale for your study. How well you have incorporated past literature in "building a case" for your hypothesis.

3. How well your methodology addresses your hypothesis--are you actually measuring what you think you are measuring? Is your methodology well-designed and clear?

4. The presentation of your results. Do you make it easy for your reader to understand just what you found? Is your interpretation of your results logical? Do you discuss the implications of your findings and any problems with your study?

5. Correct inclusion of references in APA style.

6. Overall organization and clarity of writing.